

March 9, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Kristi Swearengin and I am a teacher at Jones Valley Elementary. I have been a teacher in Huntsville City Schools for the past 10 years. I am also one of a few teachers who would like the opportunity for my children to be able to come to school with me. My oldest child will be entering third grade next year. He has attended Jones Valley since pre-k. He will be forced to leave the school and the friends that he has been with for the past four years and attend a brand new school. I really fear that this move is going to negatively impact my son both academically and socially. My youngest child will be entering kindergarten next year and would love nothing more than to get to go to school where his mom and big brother get to go.

Having my children attend a school other than the one where I teach is going to cause tremendous stress on my family. My husband leaves the house around 5:00 am every morning. Therefore, I have no one to help with getting my children to school in the morning. Students are not allowed to enter the building until 7:30. I refuse to drop my children off at school before the doors open. There is no way that I will be able to drop my children off and get to my school in time in order to clock in by 7:45. Also, I will be forced to pay for after school care for my children. There have been quite a few instances where extended day has been canceled. How will I be able to pick my children up in that situation? My husband's job does not allow him the flexibility to leave early and I have no other family nearby who would be able to pick them up.

I have been so blessed to have my oldest son with me at Jones Valley these past 4 years. I have been able to be there for his first days of school, classroom parties, and other special events. If my children are at another school, I will be missing out on all of these special moments. As a mother, I am going to try to be at as many of these events as possible. This will mean me taking time away from my classroom. My youngest son has an IEP. Instead of being able to schedule meetings during my planning time, I will have to take time off and be out of my classroom in order to attend. Most afternoons, I am one of the last teachers to leave. I stay late to ensure everything is ready for my students to come in the next morning. I will now have to leave as soon as possible to pick my children up because I want them to spend as little time as possible in after school care. I want to be the one spending time with them and helping them with their homework.

I just ask that you take everything that myself and the other teachers affected by this have said into consideration before making your final decision.

Thank you,

Kristi Swearengin